

Boycott—381 days of peaceful protest when ordinary men, women, and children sent the extraordinary message that second-class citizenship was unacceptable. Rather than ride in the back of buses, families and friends walked. Neighborhoods and churches formed carpools. Their actions stirred the conscience of Americans of every background, and their resilience in the face of fierce violence and intimidation ultimately led to the desegregation of public transportation systems across our country.

Rosa Parks's story did not end with the boycott she inspired. A lifelong champion of civil rights, she continued to give voice to the poor and the marginalized among us until her passing on October 24, 2005.

As we mark the 100th anniversary of Rosa Parks's birth, we celebrate the life of a genuine American hero and remind ourselves that although the principle of equality has always been self-evident, it has never been self-executing. It has taken acts of courage from generations of fearless and hopeful Americans to make our country more just. As heirs to the progress won by those who came before us, let us pledge not only to honor their legacy, but also to take up their cause of perfecting our Union.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 4, 2013, as the 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Rosa Parks. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate service, community, and education programs to honor Rosa Parks's enduring legacy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8933 of February 28, 2013

American Red Cross Month, 2013

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since our Nation's founding, seasons of trial and bitter hardship have revealed a core belief we share as Americans: that when we see our neighbors in need, we will always stand united in helping them get back on their feet. This month, we honor men and women who deliver relief to communities around the world, and we renew the compassionate spirit that continues to keep our country strong and our people safe.

The American Red Cross has proudly upheld a commitment to service that spans generations. Witness to the scars left by civil war, Clara Barton founded the organization in 1881 as a way to lift up the suffering—from warriors wounded in the line of duty to families displaced by damaging storms. In the years since, countless service and relief organizations have joined the American Red Cross in realizing that noble vision.

We saw the depth of their dedication just 4 months ago, when the sweeping devastation of Hurricane Sandy put millions of Americans in harm's way. In darkness and danger, thousands of professionals and volunteers stepped up to serve. They secured supplies and shelter when our people needed them most. And when times were tough, they proved that America is tougher because we all pull together.

That sense of resolve has seen our Nation through our greatest challenges, and the conviction that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers will always remain at the heart of who we are as a people. As we reflect on the ties that bind us together, let us pay tribute to humanitarian organizations working here at home and around the world, and let us rededicate ourselves to service in the months ahead.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America and Honorary Chairman of the American Red Cross, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2013 as American Red Cross Month. I encourage all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and by supporting the work of service and relief organizations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8934 of February 28, 2013

Irish-American Heritage Month, 2013

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

For more than two centuries, America has been made and remade by striving, hopeful immigrants looking for a chance to pursue their dreams. Millions among them were born in Ireland, separated from our shores but united by their belief in a better day. This month, we celebrate the Irish-American journey, and we reflect on the ways a nation so small has inspired so much in another.

Generations of Irish left the land of their forebears to cast their fortunes with a young Republic. Escaping the blight of famine or the burden of circumstance, many found hardship even here. They endured prejudice and stinging ridicule. But through it all, these new citizens never gave up on one of our oldest ideas: that anyone from anywhere can write the next great chapter in the American story. So they raised families and built communities, earned a living and sent their kids to school. In time, what it meant to be Irish helped define what it means to be American. And as they did their part to make this country stronger, Irish Americans shared in its success, retaining the best of their heritage and passing it down to their children.